



March 2013

NEWSLETTER FOR THE PAID & VOLUNTEER STAFF OF RAILTOWN 1897 STATE HISTORIC PARK

Upcoming Events

March 5

Railtown Ladies Luncheon @ Willow Steakhouse in Jamestown. Call Marge at 533-4595 for info

March 2 & 3

GCOR Training 2-day class for all engine crew volunteers 8-4pm each day

March 9 (9am-3pm)

Telling The Railtown Story 9 (Carriage Room) Curating, The Good, The Bad and The Ugly w/ Lisa DeLacy,

How To Interpret A Steam Locomotive w/ George Sapp plus a model tour w/ John Stier

March 16 (9am-3pm)

Telling The Railtown Story (Carriage Room), The History of Jamestown w/ Joe Sparagna, Blacksmith & Belt Shop w/ Al Lehr and Lisa DeLacy, and 1pm model tour with Joe Sparagna

March 23 (9am-3pm)

Telling The Railtown Story, Hollywood & The Sierra Railway w/ Monty Youngborg, Thematic Interpretation w/ Joe Von Hermann (Interpreter III),

March 30 (9am-3pm)

Car Host Training w/ Dave Connery, Ron White and Tommy Johnson. Practice train rides at 11am and 2pm (Carriage Room)

April 2

Railtown Ladies Luncheon @ Hong Kong Restaurant in Sonora. Call Marge at 533-4595 for information

Warren C. Potts a Parallel of Thomas Bullock

By Lisa Folsom DeLacy/ Curator

After the American Civil War, stories of striking it big out West were still floating around the battle-scarred South, the East and the Midwest, luring many to the tough life of pioneering the West with grit and determination to better their lives. Even while the Civil War raged on in 1864, gold and silver strikes were announced in Arizona, most notably in mining trade magazines, and there was lots of room for newcomers: Four pioneer families could be counted in the Prescott area of the Arizona territory at that time. Varney Stephens and William N. Kelly engaged in freighting and eventually became merchants of stationery and clothing in Prescott. Both men were patriarchs of the old pioneer families. Stephens had a son and three daughters, one of whom became the wife of W.N. Kelly. In Sierra history, we know W. N. Kelly as the first name of the Rogers locomotive that sits in our roundhouse today. This was her moniker when she was run on the Prescott and Arizona Central Railroad. But let's not get ahead of ourselves. During the earlier years of the 1870s young men were traveling often on foot to find work, and to find fortune. Enter one very young and thin Thomas Bullock, and also one Warren Potts. It appears that both of these versatile men appeared on the scene near Prescott, Arizona at about the same time. By 1875 a great discovery in Yavapai County of a silver vein brought fresh hordes of fortune-hunters to the area- enough to emphasize the need for a railroad. Bullock was in the right place at the right time and Potts was as well. Warren Charles Potts made his way to Prescott when he was 20 in 1875, right around the time when W.N. Kelly became the mayor of Prescott. Eight years later Potts married another of Varney Stephens' daughters, Josie. In the eight years from his arrival to the area to his marriage into a well-established family, Potts had worked his way up the social ladder and made enough money to move his parents and siblings. He not only married the mayor's sister-in-law but also became a devoted employee of Thomas Bullock's Prescott and Arizona Central Railroad. Clippings in a Potts family scrapbook (continue next page)



Figure 1, W. N. Kelly picnicking in Crook's Canyon with the Stephens women. Josie, Martina, Mother Nancy, and Caroline, left



Figure 2 Warren C. Potts ca. 1875

(Continued) show the wedding attendees to be the most prestigious that Arizona had to offer. Like Thomas Bullock, whose story we cover well in Sierra Railroad History, Warren Potts epitomized the Western success story. He was a builder, and a hardworking man. He oversaw the building of the road bed for the P&AC. In 1886, Potts had managed to build a bridge over the Verde River that led him to Banghart's Station. In 1887 he was overseeing the construction of the coal bin and boarding house for the railroad in Prescott. By 1890 he is noted in the Prescott Courier as the bridge Superintendent, but by this time, legal and financial troubles had begun to set in for the Prescott and Arizona Central. By 1893 Potts and his family were living in the passenger depot -- perhaps as caretakers for the freight depot, rolling stock, and the roundhouse while the railroad sat idle. Clippings from the Potts scrapbook have him still there with his family in 1896, when fire broke out and gutted the roundhouse, freight and passenger depots and very nearly all of Potts' personal effects. That same year, according to author David Myrick, Potts kept busy restoring locomotive no. 1, which had suffered from an earlier blaze. From the burning of the last of the P&AC buildings we then find Potts in California, making the roadbed for the new Sierra Railway. Potts family lore tells of Potts being the man that brought the engine we know today as Sierra No. 3 to California. Warren Potts became the first Superintendent of the Sierra Railway, and remained so minus a few stints for roughly 12 years. His lust for adventure and "making it big" never left him. In April of 1906, Potts puts all his effects up for Auction, including the "Bungalow" still standing across the street from the Sierra freight shed in Jamestown. The home was noted in the papers as standing apart from all other homes in Jamestown. It was a pivotal year. His daughter and son-in law left for Dawson, Yukon Territory that February, and had struck it big by the fall. This may have been the impetus for Mr. and Mrs. Potts' departure for Goldfield, Nevada, a mining boomtown. In 1908, they are operating a store there. But the bust for Goldfield came by 1910, and clippings from the "Motherlode Magnet" in the Potts family scrapbook, places them again in Sonora, rubbing elbows with the social elite that same year, hosting a New Year's Party at the Hotel Victoria -- The Sonora Inn today. Warren and Josie finally end up in Sacramento running another mercantile, a business Josie would have known since childhood in Prescott. History indicates that Thomas Bullock and Warren Potts had a mutual respect and friendship. Both men came from nothing, and were adventurous and daring, riding the wave of success until it fizzled, only to catch the next wave on its way. Each discovered their talents; Potts could grade, build, restore locomotives and machinery and generally make himself useful in all manners. Bullock discovered his strong personality could get people to listen and to back him, and he had a financial daring that suited the time. Potts became a devoted railroad man for much of his life, but ended life humbly, as did Bullock. These two parallels shaped the Sierra Railway, and I am sure there are others. *I would like to thank the Sharlot Hall Museum in Prescott Arizona for use of their photos and input, and the descendants of Warren and Josie Potts for sharing the family history with us.*



Figure 4: W.C. Potts residence 1903. Though changed, it still stands today across from the Freight Shed.



Figure 5: the Potts Grocery at Goldfield, Nevada 1908. Josie and Warren are behind the counter.

Welcome To our New Volunteers Joining us in 2013 !



**Thomas
Zehrung**



**Alannah
Norans**



**Mike
Daniels**



**David
Luther**



**Jerry
Sterni**



**Michael
Sharps**



**Tom
Van Horn**



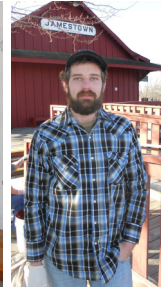
**Robert
Williams**



**Dieter
Teschke**



**Jeannie
Teschke**



**Bryan
Harrison**



**John
Sherbert**



**Sam
Kuntz**

Railtown News

Park To Open Again On Tuesdays and Wednesdays

Railtown will once again open on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, bringing us back again to a seven-day-week schedule. There will be special shop tours on Tuesdays and we'll be running diesel train excursion rides on Wednesdays in July and August

Superintendent Kim Baker

Kim has been and will be gone a lot for training these days. Many of us may not realize that our park superintendent, in addition to being an officer of the law as a park ranger, is also a certified first responder for medical emergencies.

Sign Restoration Workers Needed

Qualified volunteers are needed to re-create many of our original depot movie signs. Many had to be taken down, due to ongoing deterioration in the interest of preservation. But, take heart! New signs can be created as exact replicas. Anyone with sign painting skills is welcome to contact our Curator, Lisa DeLacy at 984-3119.

PowerPoint Available

Kyle Wyatt's presentation on the Locomotives and Rolling Stock of Railtown was well received and very informative. He has graciously given permission to anyone who would like a copy to have one. You'll need the PowerPoint program to view it. I have it on my desktop at in the volunteer office and if you bring a memory stick I'd be happy to copy it for you. Call Dave Rainwater at 984-4408.

Early Car Host, Tour Guide, Roundhouse Host & Greeter Sign Ups

This year we'll be putting out the call for early sign ups. Each month I'll email requesting your availability for these positions. Sign ups will be on a first-come, first-serve basis. As a general rule we'll need five car hosts and one alternate each Saturday and Sunday. Two tour guides each and three Roundhouse Hosts. Greeters are always needed in period costume. It adds to the enhancement of the visitor's experience. Check your calendars early and email me or call the volunteer line at 984-4408.



PO Box 1250

Jamestown, CA 95327

Return Service Requested

TO:



Depot Store- (209) 984-3953

Volunteer Desk- (209) 984-4408

Docent Site- <http://railtown.team.parks.ca.gov/volunteers>

Railtown Blog- www.railtown1897.wordpress.com

Crew Caboose- (209) 984-0352



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Newsletter Available in Alternative Format on Request